



Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass



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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

MONDAY:

ANDERSON BAHAMON
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

FRIDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

SATURDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITAR
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Head of workplace rights agency urges white men to report discrimination

By **CLAIRE SAVAGE**
Associated Press

The head of the U.S. agency for enforcing workplace civil rights posted a social media call-out urging white men to come forward if they have experienced race or sex discrimination at work.

"Are you a white male who has experienced discrimination at work based on your race or sex? You may have a claim to recover money under federal civil rights laws," U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Chair Andrea Lucas, a vocal critic of diversity, equity and inclusion, wrote in an X post Wednesday evening with a video of herself. The post



Andrea Lucas, nominee to be a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, testifies during a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee hearing, June 18, 2025, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

urged eligible workers to reach out to the agency "as soon as possible" and referred users to the agency's fact sheet on "DEI-related discrimination" for more information.

Lucas' post, viewed millions of times, was shared about two hours after Vice President JD Vance posted an article he said "describes the evil of DEI and its consequences," which also received millions of views. Lucas responded to Vance's post saying: "Absolutely right @JDVance. And precisely because this widespread, systemic, unlawful discrimination primarily harmed white men, elites didn't just turn a blind eye; they celebrated it. Absolutely unacceptable; unlawful; immoral."

She added that the EEOC "won't rest until this discrimination is eliminated."

A representative for Vance did not respond to a request for comment. Lucas said Thursday evening that "the gaslighting surrounding what DEI initiatives have entailed in practice ends now."

We can't attack and remedy a problem if we refuse to call it out for what it is race or sex discrimination or acknowledge who is harmed."

She added that "the EEOC's doors are open to

all," and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 "protects everyone, including white men."

Since being elevated to acting chair of the EEOC in January, Lucas has been shifting the agency's focus to prioritize "rooting out unlawful DEI-motivated race and sex discrimination," aligning with President Donald Trump's own anti-DEI executive orders. Trump named Lucas as the agency's chair in November.

Earlier this year, the EEOC along with the Department of Justice issued two "technical assistance" documents attempting to clarify what might constitute "DEI-related Discrimination at Work" and providing guidance on how workers can file complaints over such concerns.

The documents took broad aim at practices such as training, employee resource groups and fellowship programs, warning such programs depending on how they're constructed could run afoul of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race and gender.

Those documents have been criticized by former agency commissioners as misleading for portraying DEI initiatives as legally fraught.

David Glasgow, executive director of the Meltzer Center for Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging at the NYU School of Law, said Lucas's latest social media posts demonstrate a "fundamental misunderstanding of what DEI is."

"It's really much more about creating a culture in which you get the most out of everyone who you're bringing on board, where everyone experiences fairness and equal opportunity, including white men and members of other groups," Glasgow said.

The Meltzer Center tracks lawsuits that are likely to affect workplace DEI practices, including 57 cases of workplace discrimination

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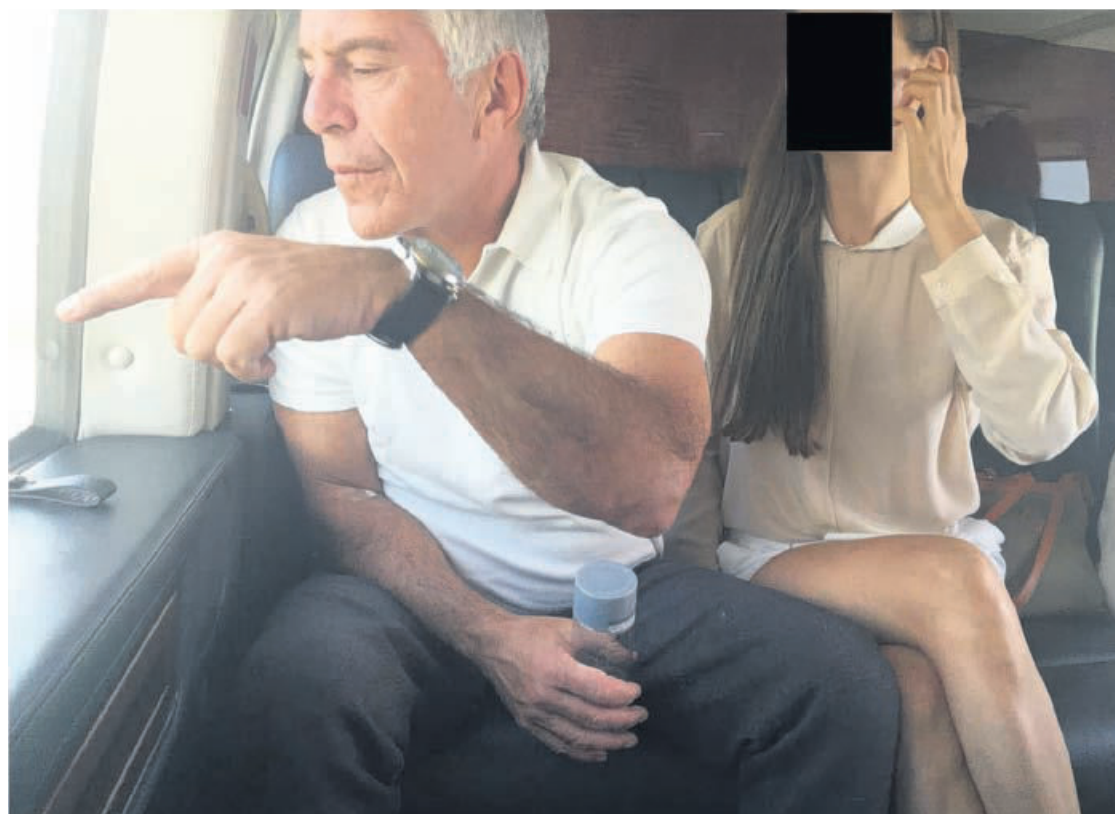
Justice Department begins releasing long-awaited files tied to Epstein sex trafficking investigation

By MICHAEL R. SISK, ERIC TUCKER and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department on Friday began releasing its files on Jeffrey Epstein, a convicted sex offender and wealthy financier known for his connections to some of the world's most influential people, including Donald Trump, who as president had tried to keep the files sealed. The total volume was not immediately clear, though Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche said in a Fox News Channel interview that he expected the department to release "several hundred thousand" records Friday and then several hundred thousand more in the coming weeks.

The records could contain the most detailed look yet at nearly two decades' worth of government investigations into Epstein's sexual abuse of young women and underage girls. Their release has long been demanded by a public hungry to learn whether any of Epstein's rich and powerful associates knew about or participated in the abuse.



This undated redacted photo released by Democrats on the House Oversight Committee Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025, shows Jeffrey Epstein.

Epstein's accusers have also long sought answers about why federal authorities shut down their initial investigation into the allegations in 2008.

Bowing to political pressure from fellow Republicans, Trump on Nov. 19 signed a bill giving the Justice Department 30 days to release most of its files and

communications related to Epstein, including information about the investigation into his death in a federal jail. The law's passage was a remarkable display of bipartisanship that overcame months of opposition from Trump and Republican leadership.

What the law allows That law allows for redac-

tions about the victims or ongoing investigations but makes clear no records shall be withheld or redacted due to "embarrassment, reputational harm, or political sensitivity." Attorney General Pam Bondi said on Nov. 14 that she had ordered a top federal prosecutor to investigate Epstein's ties to Trump's po-

litical foes, including former President Bill Clinton. Bondi acted after Trump pressed for such an inquiry, though he did not explain what supposed crimes he wanted the Justice Department to investigate.

None of the men Trump mentioned in a social media post demanding the investigation has been accused of sexual misconduct by any of Epstein's victims.

In July, Trump dismissed some of his own supporters as "weaklings" for falling for "the Jeffrey Epstein hoax." But both Trump and House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., failed to prevent the legislation from coming to a vote. Trump did a U-turn on the files once it became clear that congressional action was inevitable. He insisted that the Epstein matter had become a distraction to the Republican agenda and that releasing the records was the best way to move on.

The Epstein investigations Police in Palm Beach, Florida, began investigating Epstein in 2005 after the family of a 14-year-old girl reported she had been molested at his mansion. □

Associated Press

Turning Point USA's Erika Kirk backs Vice President JD Vance's potential 2028 presidential bid

By MATT BROWN and JONATHAN J. COOPER

Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Erika Kirk, widow of Turning Point USA founder Charlie Kirk and the organization's new leader, endorsed a potential presidential bid by Vice President JD Vance on the opening night of the conservative youth group's annual conference. After telling the cheering crowd that Turning Point would help keep Congress in Republican hands next year, she said, "We are going to get my husband's friend JD Vance elected for 48 in the most resounding way possible." Vance would be the 48th president if he takes of-

fice after President Donald Trump.

Kirk's statement on Thursday is the most explicit backing of Vance's possible candidacy by a woman who has been positioned as a steward to her late husband's legacy. Charlie Kirk had become a powerbroker and bridge builder within the conservative movement before he was assassinated in September.

Vance was close with Charlie Kirk, whose backing helped enable his rapid political rise. After the assassination, Vance and his wife joined Erika Kirk in Utah to fly her husband's remains home to Arizona aboard Air Force Two.

Vance is set to speak to Turning Point on Sunday, the conference's last day. The convention has featured the usual spectacle and energy that have characterized the organization's events, but the proceedings have also been marred by intense infighting among conservative commentators and estranged allies who have turned on each other in the wake of Kirk's death. As Trump's vice president, Vance is well-positioned to inherit the movement that remade the Republican Party and twice sent Trump to the White House. But it would be no small task for him to hold together the Trump coalition, which

is built around personal loyalty to him more than shared political goals. Various wings of the conservative movement already are positioning

to steer the party after Trump's presidency, a skirmish that's becoming increasingly public and pointed. □



Erika Kirk speaks during Turning Point USA's AmericaFest 2025, Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025, in Phoenix.

Associated Press

U.S. military to stop shooting pigs and goats as a way to train medics for the battlefield

By BEN FINLEY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. military will stop its practice of shooting pigs and goats to help prepare medics for treating wounded troops in a combat zone, ending an exercise made obsolete by simulators that mimic battlefield injuries. The prohibition on “live fire” training that includes animals is part of this year’s annual defense bill, although other uses of animals for wartime training will continue. The ban was championed by Rep. Vern Buchanan, a Florida Republican who often focuses on animal rights issues.

Buchanan called the change “a major step forward in reducing unnecessary suffering in military practices.”

“With today’s advanced simulation technology, we can prepare our medics for the battlefield while reducing harm to animals,” he said in a statement to The Associated Press. “As Co-Chair of the Animal Protection Caucus, I’m proud to continue leading efforts



The seal is seen on a podium at the Pentagon, Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2025, in Washington, before Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth speaks.

to end outdated and inhumane practices.”

Buchanan’s office said the Defense Department will continue to allow training that involves stabbing, burning and using blunt instruments on animals, while also allowing “weapon wounding,” which is when the military tests weapons on animals. Animal rights

groups say the animals are supposed to be anesthetized during such training and testing.

The Pentagon referred comment on the new policy to the Defense Health Agency, which oversees the training. The agency said in an email that it’s looking into the new ban.

Groups such as People

for the Ethical Treatment of Animals declared victory, saying the change will spare the lives of thousands of animals each year and “marks a historic shift toward state-of-the-art, human-relevant simulation technology.”

It’s unclear how often the military uses animals for training. Previous defense

Associated Press

ills and other pieces of legislation have sought to reduce their use for trauma training, according to a 2022 report from the Government Accountability Office, an independent agency that serves Congress. The 2013 defense bill required the Pentagon to submit a report that outlined a strategy for transitioning to human-based training methods, the GAO said. A 2018 statute required the secretary of defense to ensure the military used simulation technology “to the maximum extent practicable” or unless use of animals was deemed necessary by the medical chain of command.

The GAO report stated the animals are placed under anesthesia and then euthanized.

“Live animals such as pigs and goats are used in trauma training because their organs and tissues are similar to humans, they have biological variation that can complicate treatment and provide opportunities to control medical conditions,” the report stated. □

Idaho jury convicts security company owner in split verdict over tumultuous town hall

By The Associated Press

COEUR D’ALENE, Idaho (AP) — A man convicted of battering two people at a turbulent legislative town hall was found not guilty on a count that related a

woman who was seen being dragged out in a video that went viral.

The Kootenai County jury returned the split verdict against Paul Trouette on Thursday, finding him guilty

of violating rules about security guard uniforms and of two counts of misdemeanor battery for his actions against two people who objected when they saw the woman being dragged out. He was found not guilty of four other charges, including battery and false imprisonment, the Coeur d’Alene Press reported.

The chaos at the February meeting in Coeur d’Alene that drew widespread attention was footage of Teresa Borrenpohl, a Democratic legislative candidate who was pulled from the audience after heckling the speakers. The video showed Kootenai County Sheriff Bob Norris telling Borrenpohl to leave, and then stepping back and recording on his cellphone as

multiple unidentified men approached, grabbed her and dragged her out of the meeting. The men were security officers with LEAR Asset Management, but were not wearing any identification or uniforms, and witnesses said they repeatedly refused to identify themselves.

The Idaho Attorney General’s office declined to bring any charges against the sheriff, but the Coeur d’Alene city prosecutor’s office filed misdemeanor charges against Trouette, who owns the security company. Charges were also initially filed against the other security guards but they were later dropped. The mixed verdict came after almost eight hours of deliberation, following a three-day trial. “Jus-

tice was done,” the city’s chief deputy prosecutor Ryan Hunter said. Trouette declined to comment on Friday. The town hall was organized by the Kootenai County Republican Central Committee, and hundreds of people from the deeply Republican region attended the event. People in the audience sometimes cheered or shouted words of agreement with the lawmakers speaking at the event, while others including Borrenpohl voiced their opposition.

Defense counsel for Trouette told jurors that he was acting at the sheriff’s behest and so did not commit any crimes. In Idaho, sheriffs have the authority to command citizens to aid them in the execution of their duties. □



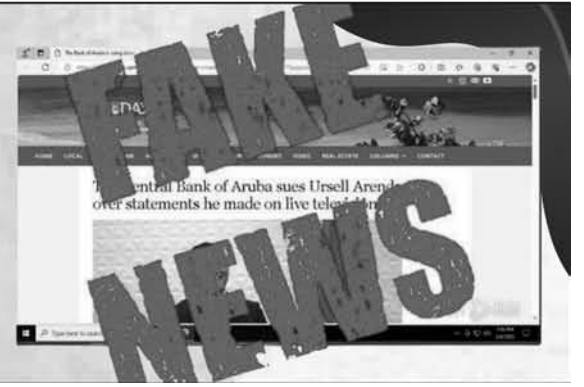
Employees of a security firm, LEAR Asset Management, drag Post Falls resident Teresa Borrenpohl out of a town hall meeting on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025, in Post Falls, Idaho.

Associated Press

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Canada and the U.S. to launch formal talks to review their free trade agreement in mid-January



Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney pumps his fist as he arrives to deliver remarks at the Liberal caucus holiday party in Ottawa, on Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025.

By **ROB GILLIES**
Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canada and the U.S. will launch formal discussions to review their free trade agreement in mid-January, the office

of Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said. The prime minister confirmed to provincial leaders that Dominic LeBlanc, the country's point person for U.S.-Canada trade rela-

tions, "will meet with U.S. counterparts in mid-January to launch formal discussions," Carney's office said in a statement late Thursday. The United States-Mexico-

Associated Press

Canada trade pact, or USMCA, is up for review in 2026. U.S. President Donald Trump negotiated the deal in his first term and included a clause to possibly renegotiate the deal in 2026. Carney met with the leaders of Canada's provinces on Thursday to give them an update on trade talks with the U.S. Canada is one of the most trade-dependent countries in the world, and more than 75% of Canada's exports go to the country's southern neighbor. But most exports to the U.S. are currently exempted by USMCA. Trump cut off trade talks to reduce tariffs on certain sectors with Carney in October after the Ontario provincial government ran an anti-tariff advertisement in the U.S. That followed a spring of acrimony, since abated, over Trump's insistence that Canada should become the 51st U.S. state.

Carney said earlier Thursday that Canada and the U.S. were close to an agreement at the time on sectoral tariff relief in multiple areas, including steel and aluminum. Tariffs are taking a toll on certain sectors of Canada's economy, particularly aluminum, steel, auto and lumber. Carney also said trade irritants flagged this week by U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer are elements of a "much bigger discussion" about continental trade. Greer said a coming review of the Canada-U.S.-Mexico trade deal will hinge on resolving U.S. concerns about Canadian policies on dairy products, alcohol and digital services. Carney and the provincial premiers agreed to meet in person in Ottawa early in the new year. Canada is the top export destination for 36 U.S. states. □

Bolivia's largest cities brought to standstill by transportation strike over fuel price hike

By **CARLOS VALDEZ**
Associated Press

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — The streets of Bolivia's largest cities, La Paz and Santa Cruz, were brought to a standstill on Friday as public transportation workers went on strike against a 100% fuel price increase ordered by the new government in the South American country. Food and transportation prices soared, and the workers have demanded that officials revoke the fuel increase. In La Paz, protesters blocked street corners, while in other cities, pub-

lic transportation was shut down, long lines formed and residents joined the protests with marches. Protests could spread nationwide in the coming days, if the government doesn't restore subsidies for gasoline and diesel, said Edson Valdez, a leader of the transportation union. "The government has given the people the worst Christmas gift," he said. "Not only have transportation fares doubled, food prices are through the roof, they've risen again," said Natalia Rodríguez, a homemaker.

People crowded into markets to stock up before prices climb further. "The decree will not be touched," Presidency Minister José Luis Lupo said. "It is not negotiable. "It is a painful measure, but it must be done," he said. "We will negotiate public service rates, but there is no other way." The government delegated to mayors the negotiations over urban fares with drivers. President Rodrigo Paz, a center-right politician, took office more than a month ago, ending two decades of leftist rule in Bolivia.

"We inherited a country with rising inflation, without hurt in its economy, hurt in its reserves, without dollars, with fuel and with a ransacked state," Paz said. □



People protest President Rodrigo Paz's announcement to stop subsidizing fuel in La Paz, Bolivia, Friday, Dec. 19, 2025.

Associated Press

Syria welcomes the permanent repeal of sweeping U.S. sanctions

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Syria's government and its allies on Friday welcomed the final lifting of the most draconian sanctions imposed on the country in recent decades.

The U.S. Congress imposed the so-called Caesar Act sanctions on Syria's government and financial system in 2019 to punish then-President Bashar Assad for human rights abuses during the country's nearly 14-year civil war that began in 2011.

After Assad was ousted in a lightning rebel offensive in December 2024, advocates including some who had previously lobbied for the imposition of the sanctions pushed to have the penalties removed. They argued that the sanctions were preventing international investors from launching reconstruction projects and blocking Syria from rebuilding its battered economy and infrastructure.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who had previously lifted the penalties temporarily by executive order, signed off on the final repeal late Thursday after



Syria's interim president, Ahmad al-Sharaa, greets people as he attends celebrations marking the first anniversary of the ousting of former President Bashar Assad in Damascus, Syria, Monday, Dec. 8, 2025.

Congress passed it as part of the country's annual defense spending bill. Some lawmakers had pushed for making the repeal conditional on steps by the new Sunni Islamist-dominated Syrian government to protect religious minorities, among other measures. In the end, the sanctions were repealed

without conditions but with a requirement for periodic reports to Congress on Syria's progress on issues including minority rights and counterterrorism measures. Syria's foreign ministry in a statement Friday thanked the U.S. for the move and said it will "contribute to alleviating the burdens on the Syrian people and

open the way for a new phase of recovery and stability." It called for Syrian businesspeople and foreign investors to "explore investment opportunities and participate in reconstruction," the cost of which the World Bank has estimated at \$216 billion. Central Bank Governor Ab-

dulkader Husrieh said in a statement that the Caesar Act repeal will facilitate the country's reintegration in the international financial system by allowing it to seek a sovereign credit rating.

"Syria will likely start with a low rating, which is normal for countries emerging from conflict," he said. "The real value lies in the benchmark set by the rating and the road map it provides for improvement."

Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, regional allies of the new Syrian government led by interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa, also welcomed the move.

"We hope that this step will contribute to strengthening stability, security and prosperity in Syria by further promoting international cooperation towards the country's reconstruction and development," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Oncu Keceli said in a statement.

The Saudi foreign ministry commended "the significant and positive role played by US President Donald Trump" in lifting the sanctions. □

Associated Press

3 killed in Taiwan knife attack, with the suspect later falling to his death from a department store

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — A man with a knife and smoke grenades attacked crowds indiscriminately in Taiwan's capital on Friday evening, killing at least three people and injuring nine others, according to the national news agency and the city government. The suspect later fell to his death from a department store building. Police said that the suspect was declared dead at a hospital after jumping from the building's sixth floor, the Central News Agency reported.

The suspect, identified as a 27-year-old man named Chang Wen, threw smoke grenades near an underground exit of the Taipei Main subway station, close to the city's main train station, and randomly stabbed people with the knife, sending pedestrians

running, according to local media reports. He then headed north to a popular shopping district, where he threw smoke grenades and stabbed multiple people on the first and fourth floors of the Eslite Spectrum Nanxi department store, primarily in the

neck, the news agency said, citing police. Video footage aired on local television networks showed the suspect, who was wearing a gas mask and clad in black, dropping at least two smoke

grenades at the metro station. He was later seen near Eslite and entering the department store while attacking passersby. Local hospitals reported three deaths from the attacks. The city government said nine others were hospitalized, including one with serious injuries.

Taipei Mayor Chiang Wan-an told local media that a 57-year-old man immediately tried to stop the suspect at the metro station's exit, but was fatally wounded. Taipei Metro said that a staffer was hospitalized after he inhaled excessive smoke while responding to the attack.

Another man died after he was attacked near the department store, according to EBC News.

A female victim told EBC that she was hit by the sus-

pect outside the department when she was waiting for her daughter for a dinner appointment.

"It did not feel like a slash it felt more like being hit," she said.

"Then it really hurt."

When she turned around, she said she saw "people lying on the ground and needing first aid because they were bleeding."

Chang failed to report for reserve military training in November 2024, and he was wanted for violating the law on mandatory military service, the news agency reported. He apparently didn't report a change in household registration, resulting in non-delivery of his reserve military service summons, the news agency reported, citing a district prosecutors' office. □



Taiwan police cordoned off the scene after a knife attack in Taipei, Taiwan, Friday, Dec. 19, 2025.

Associated Press

Dining in? Try making some local favorites! How to make “funchi”



(Oranjestad)—One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is “funchi hasa” (fried polenta sticks), a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here’s how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics

What is funchi hasa? Fun-

chi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour/Funchi flour
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to



get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take

it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce.

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.

Blackstone Beach



(Oranjestad)—Named after its most recognizable feature, the Blackstone Beach almost represents the opposite of the typical Aruban beaches. For one, it has black sand and is covered in black smooth stones. Secondly, it lies on the northern side of the island, away from the white sandy beaches of in the southern region. So, if you feel up for something different—or if it’s opposite day, visit the Blackstone Beach.

Blackstone Beach shows the more natural side of Aruba; the stones that cover the beach and the shape of it has been crafted for thousands of years through volcanic eruptions, coral reef movements and wave activity of the rural northern part of the island.

Located further east to the Natural Bridge and Andicuri Beach, the Blackstone Beach is relatively easy to access. Once you get passed the Ayo Rock Formation, take the Andicuri road leading up to Andicuri Beach. There, you can park your car and take a 1km hike towards Blackstone Beach.

This beach forms part of the Arikok National Park and is therefore a site that is preserved. This is why it is also relatively untouched by commercial influences. Despite being called a beach, do note that it is not advised to swim in the water, as the current is very strong and can easily stray you further in the wild ocean. However, you can still enjoy a spectacular view of the stones and the northern ocean that stretches out in front of the beach and take a picture with your friends or family!□

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Another treasure of Aruba's beaches: Sea Glass!

(Oranjestad)—It is hard to imagine this happening today, but years ago people dumped all kinds of refuse straight into the ocean, including old cars, and their household garbage, which of course included lots of glass. Over the next 30 years the pounding waves cleaned the beach, by breaking down everything but glass and pottery. The pounding waves washed the trash up and down, back and forth. Tons of polished, broken glass pieces were created by the pounding surf. These smoothened, colored glass particles then settled along the sea shore in millions, and that is why you can find these beautiful and colorful pieces on the north shore beaches of Aruba.

Especially on the strip on white sand between the famous Natural Bridge and the huge red anchor close

to Grapefield beach you will be able to find your own pieces of sea glass. The sea glass that was created is the product of a very long and interesting process.

It can take anywhere from 10 to 30 years to make sea glass.

The name for any piece of glass that finds its way to the ocean and tumbles around in the water long enough is Sea glass.

The colorful pieces of glass are being used for decoration, handcrafts and jewelry!

Once glass makes its way into the ocean, the glass is broken up into shards and is tumbled around in the water, where sand and other rocks act like sandpaper to smooth out its rough edges.

Sometimes as the sea glass

is passed through fire, it becomes fire glass, the rarest of sea glass with certain inclusions, just like precious gems.

For years, the water beat against the different kinds of trash being dumped. Glass, household appliances and even motor parts were discarded on the beach. The waves and weather conditions wore down the overwhelming amount of garbage in the water, creating millions of beautiful smooth rocks.

It's hard to believe the short-sighted mistakes we were making that could have potentially ruined these beautiful beaches. But thanks to natural processes, the ocean transformed the trash into the sea glass.

Each colored gem on the beach has its own story.



The ruby red glass stones are typically from old car tail-lights.

Then, the sapphire rocks are the remnants of broken apothecary bottles. The most common and the easiest to find are the brown, green and clear glass.

If you like to see the sea glass for yourself, and be in awe of the power of nature, rent a car or jeep and go explore our deserted beaches on the north side of the island. Make it a fun family day!

Even if we didn't mean to pollute the Beaches how we

did, it is inspiring to see just how the earth can correct our mistakes.

Funny, how trash can change into treasures!

Everybody knows that you are not allowed to take local shells home, but the people working at the airport have no problem you taking sea glass home. A few of those pieces make great souvenirs. You can place them in a wine glass or large bottle for decoration and every time you look at it a smile will light up your face thinking back of your unforgettable Aruba vacation! □

Adriaan Laclé: One of Aruba's richest men in the twentieth century



(Oranjestad)—The name Adriaan Laclé may ring a bell to locals as one of the main roads on the island, but about a century ago, Adriaan Laclé was a rich businessman, well-known for his generosity, wealth, and taste.

Adriaan was born in 1866 and was the eldest of six children. Not much is known about his childhood upbringing or any of his earlier business ordeals, but during his hay day he often helped people get loans, was a well-established trader, and owned several plots of land. In fact, he commissioned the construction of the famous La Quinta Carmen manor—now a restaurant. Though

he himself never lived in the beautiful manor, his own house also reflected his success and good taste. Today his house still stands in good condition and can be found in the back streets of main street Oranjestad.

Regarding his personal life, it has been said that he was married twice during his lifetime. He had his first daughter during his first marriage but lost his wife soon after her birth. During his second marriage, he fathered 16 children. However, it has been said that only 11 of those 17 made it past 18 years of age. Perhaps two of his most well-known daughters are Maria Mon-

ica Laclé and Maria Veneranda Laclé, who went on to marry successful brothers Eloy Arends and Maximilian Arends, respectively. Their houses are still standing; Eloy and Maria Monica's mansion functions as the townhall, used to host civil marriages, while Maximilian and Maria Veneranda's house stands on the opposite side of the road to them—though currently under renovation after years left in ruin. □

Source: De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba) by Evert Bongers.

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Food culture in Aruba

(Oranjestad) – Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick “to-go” breakfast, you may also find many

snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands* include sopi bonch'i rabo (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly

from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening “meal” can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

(Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks



include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco*, baskets, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks

and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun. □

*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

*Saco: Saco literally means “bag”. Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba



Aruba to me is “love”

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By sub-

mitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Brian and Sandy McCullough from MANTUA, NJ, USA.

They wrote to us saying: “Aruba to me is love! We love returning and showing off your island to our family and friends! Each year we can't wait to come back to see our Aruba friends and family!”

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

Unique fauna of Aruba

For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the cascabel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for

urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color.

The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.



Prikichi (parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found, but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.

The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of the island. It defends itself by

flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.

Coneu (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigro-nuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Coneu, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Coneu can live in a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Coneu has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they

are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Coneu is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Coneu is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Coneu can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. □



Meet an Aruban trailblazers: Padu Lampe



(Oranjestad)—This week we remember one of our most beloved Aruban giant, Juan Chabaya Lampe—better known as Padu Lampe or Padu del Caribe. As one of the most important and renowned artists in the Aruban cultural sphere, Padu's long career led him to be honored today as "the father of culture."

On April 26th, 1920, Juan Chabaya Lampe "Padu Lampe/Padu del Caribe" was born in Nassaustraat, Oranjestad. He grew up in a happy musical environment, and it is because of this that he developed a love for music. Starting from the age of 12, he was agile in the clarinet, mandolin and cuatro. Henry Lampe, his father, was also a well-known pianist and musician.

In a publication of the informative seminar, "Observer", from August 1st, 1962, Padu's many merits and friendly personality stood out. It was said that he was an excellent pianist with a personal style and full of surprises. Secondly, though the composer was not too familiar with music theory, he showed innovations in his compositions. Lastly, Padu was a promoter of Creole music around the world.

One of the most important moments in Aruban history, in which he was able to witness first-hand, was the first radio broadcast on the island on March 20th, 1954. Here, he was accompanied by Antillean guitarist Julian Coco and Hubert "Loi" Booi.

In the art world, Padu was also a known painter. During his youth,

he made several paintings using his unique style. In 1939, he participated in an art exhibit in New York, where he won a bronze medal for his painting "Typical View of Aruba."

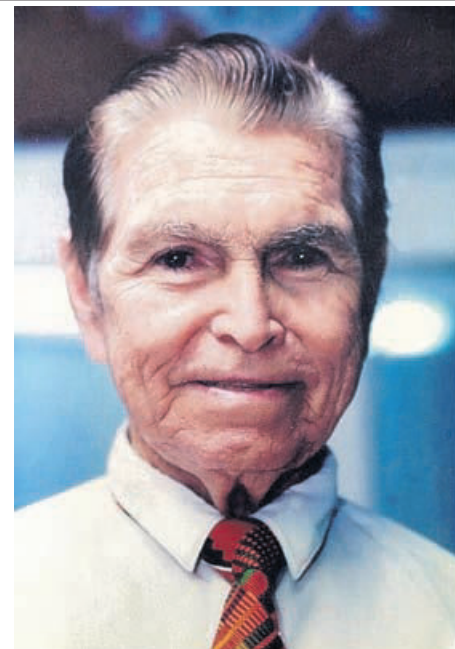
Padu remained a popular artist within the Dutch Antilles and the Caribbean as a pianist, singer, author and painter. Padu Lampe was a local artist who became renowned in Venezuela, Colombia, The U.S. and The Netherlands too. In the 1950s, he sold no less than 50 thousand copies of his long-playing albums (LPs).

Padu Lampe was a multifaceted artist, inspired by his interest in parapsychology and supernatural phenomenon. He wrote three books in Papiamentu on the subject in 1986, which was published by the Aruban National Printing Press with sponsorship provided by the Prince Bernhard Funds Netherlands Antilles.

Besides that, Padu passed his exam on "Society to Advanced Ethical Hypnosis" in 1964 in New Jersey. He received a certificate as a hypnotechician, which gave him the authority to practice hypnosis in some states.

Over the course of his career, he received many accolades and awards in Aruba, Curacao, Venezuela and the Netherlands.

Padu del Caribe passed away on November 29th, 2019, at the age of 99 years old. Padu brought the Aruban culture around the world.



His legacy will remain ingrained in the Aruban cultural history, and he will be known forever as one of the most influential trailblazers of our community.

Padu will always be in Aruba's heart, because he had composed various special songs dedicated to the mothers of the island; his song "Sonrisa di un baby" ("A baby's Smile") has been written in three different languages. Padu also wrote our national anthem "Aruba Dushi Tera", along with Mr. Rufo Wever. This song was approved by the government of Aruba and was named the official anthem of the island in 1976.

Other songs that have been considered as being almost a second anthem for Arubans is the special composition he wrote for his wife Daisy Croes called "Abo so". Daisy later passed away in 1994. □

Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass

(Oranjestad)—If you ever plan on taking a group tour of the island, you may pass through the Frenchman's Pass in Balashi. The Frenchman's pass (known to locals as "Franse Pas") remains a mysterious—and spooky—road of which its legend is told from generation to generation.

The history of the Frenchman's pass—and how it got its name—dates back to the colonization era, when the French tried to colonize the island, but were met with an angry mob of indigenous settlers, refusing to give up their land. However, as the French were heavily equipped with fire arms, the indigenous settlers began to retreat, and hid away in nearby caves.

The French colonizers tried to smoke them out of the caves, but the indigenous settlers ended up inhaling too much smoke and most died in those caves. From then on, this passage was known as Frenchman's Pass, and there have been many accounts of spirits roaming the area of Spanish Lagoon.

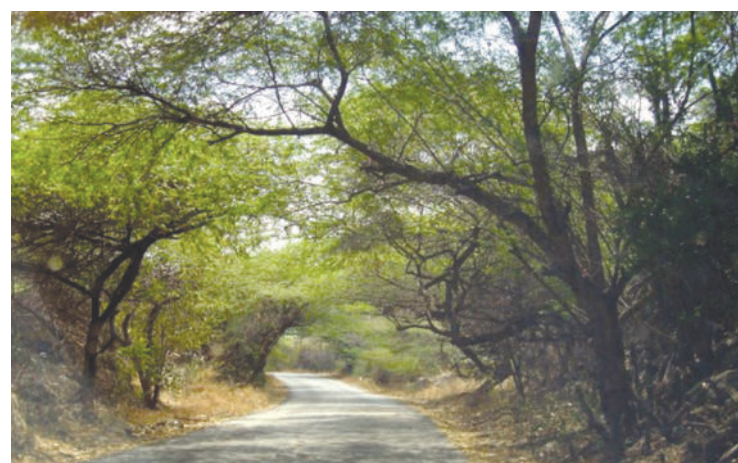
There are many ghost stories surrounding this area, but one of the most famous one involves a lonely hitchhiker, trying to find a ride back home in the dark rainy night.

Sometime after trying to hitch a ride home, the man saw a car approaching, appearing almost ghost-like in the rain. However,

since he needed a ride real bad, he didn't think twice and jumped in. But to his horror, he noticed that there was no driver in the front. Paralyzed with fear, he didn't dare to get out, and the car started to move.

When approaching a sharp turn, the hitch hiker braced for impact, but just when he thought the car might drive straight off the road and crash, he saw a hand appear out the window and turn the wheel. For the next few turns, the hand appeared again. After having had enough, the man decided to jump out and he ran to Santa Cruz.

Arriving at a nearby bar, he ordered a drink and began



to tell everyone about his experience. Everyone grew quiet, because they realized he wasn't some drunk messing around; he was telling the truth.

Sometime later, two men walked into the bar and one of them noticed the hitchhiker. He called out to his buddy and said: "Look, there's the idiot who sat in our car when we were

pushing it!"

French man's pass is one of the few sites on the island that keeps the locals on their toes. While most ghost stories may not have real grounds—or some may even be a set up story for a joke, this pass holds a lot of value to our culture of folkloric story-telling. □

Source: visitaruba.com

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

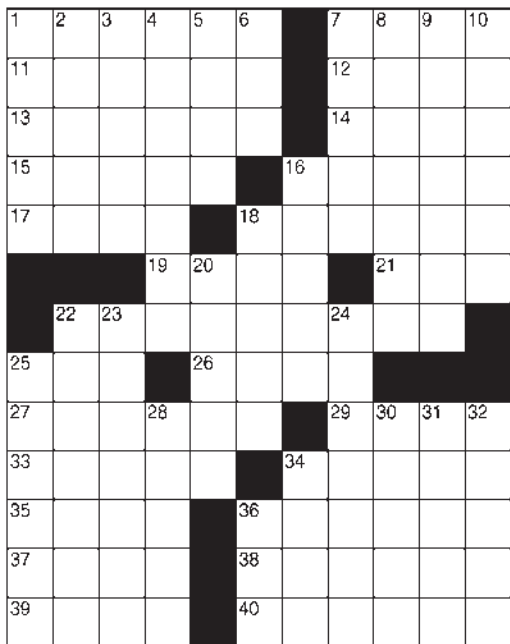
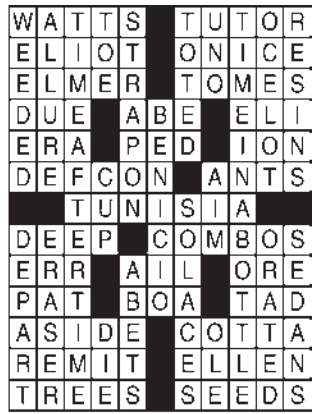
ACROSS

- 1 Fighting perhaps
7 Lab container
11 For each words
12 Analogy
13 Feel empathy
14 Visitor to Oz
15 Spoiled kids
16 Dyeing art
17 Lacking
18 Bible dancer
19 Earth circler
21 For each
22 Some manipulated photos and videos
25 Goat sound
26 Account
27 Pearl producer
29 Puppy sounds
33 Place
34 Of the kidneys
35 Atlantic catches
36 Garment with laces
37 Handling the situation

- 38 Smiling, perhaps
39 Decline
40 Gets narrower

DOWN

- 1 No-no on some diets
2 Met work
3 European fashion center
4 "I have no clue"
5 Play parts
6 Kicker's aid
7 Crucial
8 Ura-nium-235, for one
9 Now and then
10 Attractive person
16 Trite
18 Up to now
20 Made a choice
22 Florida race site
23 Entered cautiously
24 Excited
25 Kremlin setting
28 Critical asset
30 Ouzo flavor
31 Track horse
32 Some coasters
34 Capital of Italia
36 Ball club



12-30

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-30

CRYPTOQUOTE

G D Q Z J P L C Z J A Y D P U G Z
U G Y Z J G D C W D A U G Z T Z K Y U D
R D P Z , N G L J Q Z Y L H E , " L U N L C C
F Z G K Q Q L Z Y . " — K C A Y Z W
C D Y W U Z H H T J D H

Cryptoquote: LET ALL THE FAILURES OF YOUR PAST YEAR BE YOUR BEST GUIDE IN THE NEW YEAR. — MEHMET MURAT ILHAN

Cruise ship Schedule: Dec. 19 - 24 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
FRI	19	CORAL PRINCESS	07.00	16.00	B	1
		MS RENAISSANCE	09.00	18.00	C	1
		WIND SPIRIT	12.01	****	G	1
SAT	20	ZUIDERDAM	07.00	16.00	B	1
		AIDAPERLA	09.00	22.00	C	1
		WIND SPIRIT - Dept.	****	19.00	G	
SUN	21	SILVER SHADOW	13.00	****	C	1
		FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
MON	22	SILVER SHADOW - Dept.	****	18.00	C	
TUE	23	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	B	1
		SEVEN SEAS MARINER	10.00	22.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	13.30	20.00	I	1
WED	24	BRITANNIA	07.00	18.00	B	1
		ROTTERDAM	08.00	17.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
		OCEANIA ALLURA	10.00	23.00	I	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★★★★

12/20

Answer to previous puzzle

7	9	5	6	2	4	8	3	1
2	4	3	8	9	1	6	5	7
8	1	6	5	3	7	2	9	4
9	3	4	1	5	6	7	2	8
6	5	8	9	7	2	4	1	3
1	2	7	3	4	8	5	6	9
5	7	1	2	8	3	9	4	6
4	6	9	7	1	5	3	8	2
3	8	2	4	6	9	1	7	5

Difficulty: ★★★★★

12/19

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TikTok signs deal to form new US unit with investors, including Oracle, Silver Lake

By BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer
SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

TikTok has signed agreements with three major investors Oracle, Silver Lake and MGX to form a new TikTok U.S. joint venture, ensuring the popular social video platform can continue operating in the United States.

The deal is expected to close on Jan. 22, according to an internal memo seen by The Associated Press. In the communication, CEO Shou Zi Chew confirmed to employees that ByteDance and TikTok signed the binding agreements with the consortium. "I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued dedication and tireless work. Your efforts keep us operating at the highest level and will ensure that TikTok continues to grow and thrive in the U.S. and around the world," Chew wrote in the memo to employees. "With these agreements in place, our focus must stay where it's always been firmly on delivering for our users, creators, businesses and the global TikTok community."

Half of the new TikTok U.S. joint venture will be owned by a group of investors among them Oracle, Silver Lake and the Emirati investment firm MGX, who will each hold a 15% share. 19.9% of the new app will be held by ByteDance itself, and another 30.1% will be held by affiliates of existing ByteDance investors, according to the memo. The memo did not say who the other investors are and both TikTok and the White House declined to comment.

The U.S. venture will have a new, seven-member majority-American board of directors, the memo said. It will also be subject to terms that "protect Americans' data and U.S. national security."

U.S. user data will be stored locally in a system run by Oracle. The memo said U.S. users will continue "enjoying the same experience



In this July 21, 2020 file photo, a man opens social media app 'TikTok' on his cell phone, in Islamabad, Pakistan.

as today" and advertisers will continue to serve global audiences with no impact from the deal.

TikTok's algorithm the secret sauce that powers its addictive video feed will be retrained on U.S. user data to "ensure the content feed is free from outside manipulation," the memo said. The U.S. venture will also oversee content moderation and policies within the country. American officials have previously warned that ByteDance's algorithm is vulnerable to manipulation by Chinese authorities, who can use it to shape content on the platform in a way that's difficult to detect.

The algorithm has been a

central issue in the security debate over TikTok. China previously maintained the algorithm must remain under Chinese control by law. But the U.S. regulation passed with bipartisan support said any divestment of TikTok must mean the platform cuts ties specifically the algorithm with ByteDance.

The deal marks the end of years of uncertainty about the fate of the popular video-sharing platform in the United States. After wide bipartisan majorities in Congress passed and President Joe Biden signed a law that would ban TikTok in the U.S. if it did not find a new owner in the place of China's ByteDance, the platform was set to go

dark on the law's January 2025 deadline. For a several hours, it did. But on his first day in office, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to keep it running while his administration tries to reach an agreement for the sale of the company. □

Associated Press



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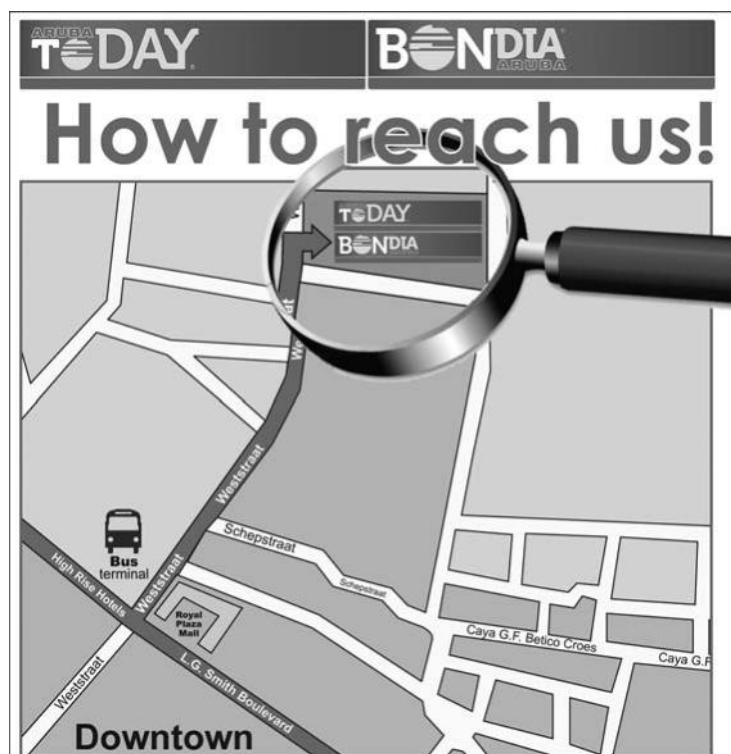
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HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Trupiaal: Tel. 583 8560

San Nicolas:

Seroe Preto: Tel. 584 4833

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic

+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
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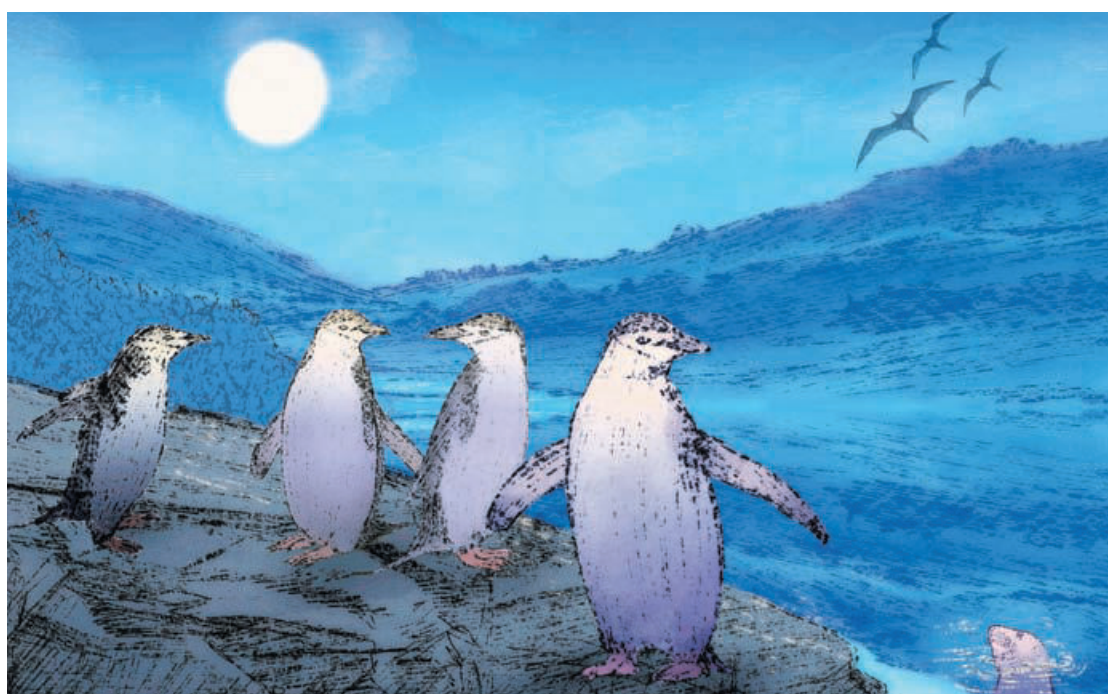
Nodding off is dangerous. Some animals have evolved extreme ways to sleep in precarious environments

By **CHRISTINA LARSON**
 AP Science Writer

Every animal with a brain needs sleep and even a few without a brain do, too. Humans sleep, birds sleep, whales sleep and even jellyfish sleep.

Sleep is universal "even though it's actually very risky," said Paul-Antoine Libourel, a researcher at the Neuroscience Research Center of Lyon in France. When animals nod off, they're most vulnerable to sneaky predators. But despite the risks, the need for sleep is so strong that no creature can skip it altogether, even when it's highly inconvenient.

Animals that navigate extreme conditions and environments have evolved to sleep in extreme ways for example, stealing seconds at a time during around-the-clock parenting, getting winks on the wing during long migrations and even dozing while swimming. For a long time, scientists could only make educated guesses about when wild animals were sleeping, observing when they lay still and closed their eyes. But in recent years, tiny trackers and helmets that



(Associated Press Illustration / Peter Hamlin)

measure brain waves miniaturized versions of equipment in human sleep labs have allowed researchers to glimpse for the first time the varied and sometimes spectacular ways that wild animals snooze.

"We're finding that sleep is really flexible in response to ecological demands," said Niels Rattenborg, an animal sleep research specialist at the Max Planck Institute for Biological Intelligence in Germany.

Call it the emerging sci-

ence of "extreme sleep."

Chinstrap penguins and their 'microsleeps'

Take chinstrap penguins in Antarctica that Libourel studies. These penguins mate for life and share parenting duties with one bird babysitting the egg or tiny gray fluffy chick to keep it warm and safe while the other swims off to fish for a family meal. Then they switch roles keeping up this nonstop labor for weeks.

Penguin parents face a common challenge: get-

ting enough sleep while keeping a close eye on their newborns.

They survive by taking thousands of catnaps a day each averaging just 4 seconds long. These short "microsleeps," as Korea Polar Research Institute biologist Won Young Lee calls them, appear to be enough to allow penguin parents to carry out their caregiving duties for weeks within their crowded, noisy colonies.

When a clumsy neighbor passes by or predatory

seabirds are near, the penguin parent blinks to alert attention and soon dozes off again, its chin nodding against its chest, like a drowsy driver. The naps add up. Each penguin sleeps for a total of 11 hours per day, as scientists found by measuring the brain activity of 14 adults over 11 days on Antarctica's King George Island.

To remain mostly alert, yet also sneak in sufficient winks, the penguins have evolved an enviable ability to function on extremely fractured sleep at least during the breeding season. Researchers can now see when either hemisphere of the brain or both at once are asleep.

Frigatebirds snooze half their brains in flight

Poets, sailors and bird-watchers have long wondered whether birds that fly for months at a time actually get any winks on the wing. In some cases, the answer is yes as scientists discovered when they attached devices that measure brain-wave activity to the heads of large seabirds nesting in the Galapagos Islands called great frigatebirds.

Hubble Space Telescope spies dusty debris from two cosmic collisions

By **ADITHI RAMAKRISHNAN**
 AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — NASA's Hubble Space Telescope got a rare look at the aftermath of two cosmic collisions and helped scientists solve a decades-old mystery.

Many years ago, scientists saw a dense, bright spot near a young star called Fomalhaut.

They thought it could be a planet and continued to track it.

But in 2023, Hubble's pictures revealed something strange. The bright spot had vanished and a new one had appeared a sign that it wasn't a planet after all. Scientists had stumbled

on the dusty debris from two cosmic crashes. Massive space rocks slammed together to create clouds of dust that were thick enough to masquerade as

planets.

Over time, the remains spread out and eventually disappeared altogether.

Scientists think the space rocks involved in the colli-

sion were at least 37 miles (60 kilometers) wide. It's rare to capture such clashes on camera, especially since theories suggest they only happen in the same vicinity about once every 100,000 years.

It's "highly unexpected" that this area "has now exhibited two, unique, massive collisions inside 20 years," said Joshua Lovell with the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in an email. He had no role in the study, which was published Thursday in the journal Science.

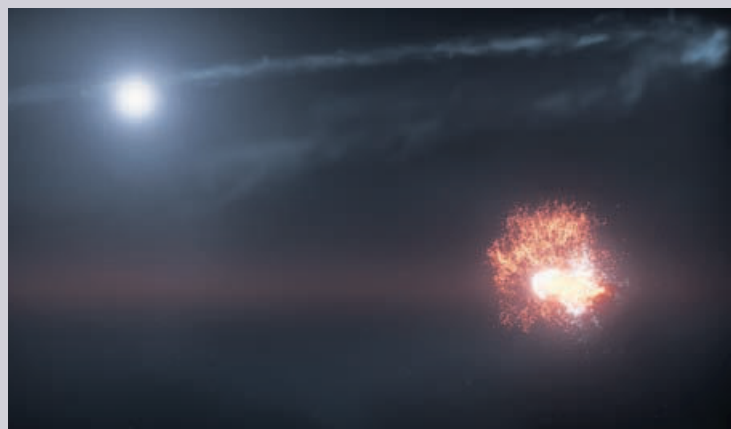
The new observations could just be a lucky find. Or, they could mean that such smashups happen

more often than scientists thought. It'll take more data to know for sure.

Collisions of large space rocks are essential to how planets like ours form and what they're made of. Studying them is "like taking a toddler picture of our solar system," said astrophysicist Meredith MacGregor with Johns Hopkins University, who was not involved with the study.

Researchers plan to track the new dust cloud in the coming years to see how it changes and eventually disintegrates.

The star near the collision site is in our cosmic neighborhood, just 25 light years from Earth.



This illustration provided by NASA in December 2025 depicts the aftermath of a collision between two massive space rocks orbiting the star Fomalhaut.

Associated Press

Bucks' Antetokounmpo says his focus is on his health rather than rumors about his future

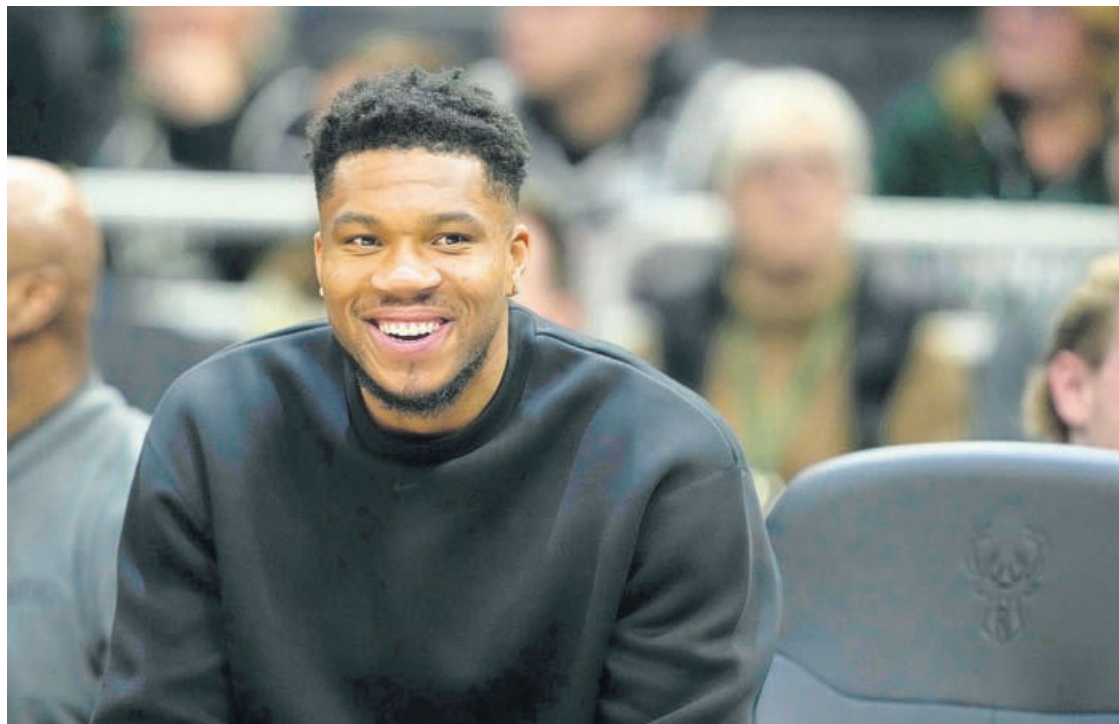
By STEVE MEGARGEE

AP Sports Writer

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Giannis Antetokounmpo said Thursday he's focused on getting healthy and helping the Milwaukee Bucks turn their season around, not on rumors about his future plans.

Antetokounmpo spoke to reporters for the first time since a Dec. 3 ESPN report indicated that he and his agent, Alex Saratsis, were talking with Bucks officials about whether he's best suited to stay in Milwaukee or get traded. Antetokounmpo strained his right calf in a victory over the Detroit Pistons that night and hasn't played since.

"There's going to be conversations that are going to be made between (my agent) and the Bucks, and him and his other players, and him and other teams and other GMs, executives around the league," Antetokounmpo said during the 24-minute media session. "It's something that you can't control. But, at the end of the day, I personally have not had the conversation with the Bucks. I'm still locked in, locked in on my teammates. Most importantly, locked in on me



Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo smiles from the bench during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Boston Celtics, Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025, in Milwaukee.

Associated Press

getting back healthy."

The speculation regarding Antetokounmpo's future has picked up as the Bucks have struggled through the last month. Milwaukee's 111-105 loss to the Toronto Raptors on Thursday night dropped the Bucks' record to 11-17. That includes a 2-9 mark in games Antetokounmpo hasn't played.

Antetokounmpo missed four games with a left adductor strain last month and hurt his calf in his fourth

game back from that injury. Antetokounmpo, who turned 31 on Dec. 6, believes his rapid return from the adductor issue may have led to the calf problem. "Maybe it was a mistake of me coming back a little bit earlier, because once I come back, now you're overcompensating," Antetokounmpo said. "The only way you can pop your soleus is by overcompensating and then having an extreme amount of load

or play a lot of games in a short period of time. Again, I think all of the things that I was thinking and trying to come back led to the incident that I had with my soleus." This is a critical season for the Bucks because of all the concerns about Antetokounmpo's future.

ESPN reported before the season that the Bucks and New York Knicks engaged in trade talks regarding Antetokounmpo in August but never gained traction on

a potential deal. Antetokounmpo spoke to reporters one day later and said he's "locked in" with the Bucks but acknowledged the possibility he could eventually change his mind.

The idea that Antetokounmpo could request a trade has been the talk of the NBA ever since.

"This is the most I've been ever talked about in my career," Antetokounmpo said. "I'm in my house with my kids and all that and I'm opening the TV and it's like, 'Oh, Giannis is going to the Memphis Grizzlies,' or 'Giannis is going to the Detroit Pistons.' Which, hey man, I'm not going to lie, I'm the hottest chick in the game right now. No, I'm joking."

Antetokounmpo said all this conjecture about his future is tough on his family and on the team. Antetokounmpo said he's had informal conversations with his teammates to offer encouragement and reassurance.

"I'm never going to have a meeting with my teammates and sit everybody down and talk about like, 'Hey guys, hey, if we don't win I'm going to get out of here,'" Antetokounmpo said. "Like, come on. □

ATP Tour sets out safeguarding policy with training for players and potential for bans

LONDON (AP) — The ATP Tour set out a new safeguarding policy Friday which aims to ensure players and staff feel safe from abuse on tour and know how to report inappropriate behavior.

In a move which mirrors work done by the WTA in women's tennis, the ATP's code of conduct sets out how investigations should be conducted and a range of potential punishments, from reprimands up to permanently revoking access to its tournaments. The ATP also says it will launch training for players, coaches and staff throughout next year.

"Everyone involved in our events — from players and their teams to staff and volunteers — deserves to feel safe, respected, and valued," chief executive Eno Polo said in a statement. "This program helps make that a reality. By introducing clear protections against abuse, we're strengthening the culture of tennis and aligning our sport with global standards of governance and care." The code of conduct covers areas like bullying, sexual harassment and violence, as well as behavior which could constitute an "abuse of trust" in a professional relationship.

It also commits players, coaches and tour personnel to report any concerns about abusive behavior and to tell the ATP's safeguarding director if they are facing investigations from police or social services about "any behavior constituting either a criminal offence or a safeguarding concern." Friday's launch of the safeguarding program brings more structure to the tour's approach, which was previously in the spotlight when the ATP commissioned an investigation in 2021 into German player Alexander Zverev. The ATP said in 2023 that the inves-

tigation found "insufficient evidence" to substantiate domestic abuse allegations against Zverev,

a three-time Grand Slam runner-up, who denied wrongdoing. □



A trophy and the ATP logo is displayed on a screen during a singles tennis match of the ATP World Tour Finals, in Turin, Italy, Sunday, Nov. 9, 2025.

Associated Press

Tua Tagovailoa could be the NFL's next quarterback reclamation project

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

Tua Tagovailoa could be the NFL's next quarterback reclamation project.

Now that he's been benched by the Dolphins, Tagovailoa's future in Miami is uncertain.

The Dolphins (6-8) will take a look at rookie seventh-round pick Quinn Ewers over the final three games. They haven't won a playoff game since January 2001, the longest drought in the NFL.

The 27-year-old Tagovailoa hasn't lived up to the \$212.4 million, four-year contract extension he signed after leading the NFL with 4,624 yards passing in 2023 and guiding the Dolphins to 11 wins and a playoff berth.

Trading Tagovailoa will be difficult because of his contract. He's due \$54 million guaranteed next season. If the Dolphins somehow found a trade partner before March 13, they would incur a dead cap hit of \$45.2 million. A trade after March 13 would result in



Miami Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa (1) walks off the field after an NFL football game against the Pittsburgh Steelers in Pittsburgh, Monday, Dec. 15, 2025.

a \$60.2 million dead cap charge.

Releasing Tagovailoa before that date means the Dolphins would owe him \$54 million in 2026 and would absorb \$99.2 million

in dead salary cap charges. That would be the largest in NFL history. Denver took an \$85 million cap hit after releasing Russell Wilson in 2024 and spread the charges over two seasons.

Associated Press

Releasing Tagovailoa with a post-June 1 designation would allow the Dolphins to spread those cap hits over two seasons with \$67.4 million allocated to the 2026 cap and the remaining \$31.8 million in 2027.

A release would seem to be the most likely outcome. The Broncos overcame that cap hit from Wilson's release, made the playoffs last season and currently have the No. 1 seed in the AFC.

The Dolphins could get creative by adding draft picks to entice a team to make a trade.

That would require finding a team that has cap space to take on Tagovailoa's large contract.

Of course, Miami could choose to keep Tagovailoa as a backup like Atlanta did with Kirk Cousins this season.

The expectation is Tagovailoa will be wearing a new uniform next year.

He's only 27, has made a Pro Bowl and posted a passer rating above 100 in each of his three previous seasons before tossing a league-leading 15 interceptions this season.

Tagovailoa also has a history of concussions so that could be a deterrent.

Several quarterbacks who were first-round picks have revived their careers after getting a fresh start with a new team. The list includes Baker Mayfield, Jared Goff and Sam Darnold.

Here are five potential landing spots for Tagovailoa in 2026:

New York Jets

They've never defeated Tagovailoa, going 0-7 against Miami when he starts. The Jets need a franchise quarterback and will likely draft one in the first round. But Tagovailoa could be an inexpensive bridge quarterback with low-risk, high-reward potential. If he's released, the Jets could sign him for the veteran minimum while the Dolphins pay him \$50 million-plus to go away.

Cleveland Browns

They're in the same position as the Jets but also have two rookie quarterbacks they've tried out this season. Third-round pick Dillon Gabriel was 1-5 in six starts. Fifth-round pick Shedeur Sanders is 1-3 going into his fifth start this week.

Las Vegas Raiders

They need a franchise quarterback and have been a franchise that isn't afraid to take risks.

Tagovailoa plays better in a warmer climate so that's a fit. The Raiders will also likely draft a quarterback in the first round.

Pittsburgh Steelers

They took a chance on Wilson last year and have Aaron Rodgers this season. He's 42 and could retire. Even if he returns for a season, the Steelers need a quarterback for the future. Tagovailoa could learn plenty from watching Rodgers for a season.

Arizona Cardinals

Kyler Murray's contract will be tough to trade unless maybe they swap him for Tagovailoa.

Murray will be entering the third season of a five-year, \$230.5 million contract extension, averaging \$46.1 million per year. He's due \$36.8 million guaranteed next year. □

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